Defending Border Areas of Myanmar, Bangladesh and Bhutan

2458. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the measures taken to defend the bordering areas along Myanmar, Bangladesh and Bhutan;

(b) whether there is any improvement in relations between India and Myanmar after the construction of a road in the area of Myanmar; and

(c) whether Government propose to exchange prisoners between India and Myanmar?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Government remain vigilant and has taken all necessary and appropriate measures to safeguard the sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of India.

(b) There has been an upswing in the relations between India and Myanmar in recent years. The construction of Tamu-Kalemyo-Kalewa road is likely to give further impetus to it.

(c) There is no proposal to exchange prisoners between India and Myanmar.

Shifting of Air Force South-West Command to Gandhinagar

†2459. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that Air Force has shifted the South-West Command from Jodhpur to Gandhi-Dham, Gandhinagar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Jodhpur District is not safe in view of the danger from Pakistan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Head Quarters, South Western Air Command (HQ SWAC) has been relocated from Jodhpur to Gandhinagar for effective command and control over its units. Gandhinagar is more centrally located in the area of operations of HQ SWAC as compared to Jodhpur, which is located toward the northern limits of jurisdiction of HQ SWAC.

(c) and (d) Jodhpur is located approximately 100 km from the nearest point on the international border and has adequate security arrangements.

Collection of Dues from Former PMs, Central Ministers and CM's for Use of defence Air Crafts

2460. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any step to collect the pending dues from former Prime Ministers, Central Ministers and state Chief Ministers, etc. for using the defence Aircrafts; and

(b) if so, the details thereof including the total dues to be collected?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government has filed suits in February 2001 in the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi for effecting recovery of Rs. 22,18,56,837/- on account of airlift dues with interest from the three former Prime Minsiters. The suits will come up for hearing on 9th January 2002.